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IDEA 0981

Copy 6 of 6

4 March 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR: Assistant Director, USA

SUBJECT: U-2 Overflights of Cuba - 28 August  
Through 14 October 1962

REFERENCE: Memorandum dated 27 February 1963;  
subject as above

1. Referenced memorandum is basically correct, however, I feel that discussing weather phenomena associated with photographic reconnaissance without including a preamble which explains the philosophy behind the tactics employed in a given time period or on a specific mission leaves the reader to formulate his own opinion, after the fact. This is specifically true of those in government who are not professionally qualified in the employment of aircraft for military or intelligence purposes. In this instance it appears that an effort is being made to defend CIA participation both in the requirements side and the operations side. No effort has been made to explain in laymen language the difference between strategic photographic reconnaissance and tactical photographic reconnaissance or the difference between high altitude and low level reconnaissance. I think it appropriate that in some paper given the DCI that concepts followed within his organization be explained. It should be stated that where general surveillance by U-2 aircraft is required, based on suspect actions in denied territory, flight tracks are produced to satisfy a strategic surveillance requirement which in many instances

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may simply identify activities in progress and not provided complete technical intelligence for the community. It should be then stated that technical intelligence is obtained by the U-2 aircraft where specific requirements are established and the flight track is planned so that photographic coverage of the target is obtained by vertical photography and that the aircraft will be within  of a specific target.

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2. The specific reason behind normal photographic reconnaissance missions requiring less than 25 % cloud cover can be explained by the very fact that this is an approval for a U. S. aircraft to overfly denied territory where in many cases the justification is based on an over-all requirement for several targets as opposed to any one specific target. In cases where a specific target has a sufficiently high priority to justify the mission it would be flown provided that specific target was forecast to have less than 25% cloud coverage in the area.

3. Following this explanation the use of the U-2 in tactical reconnaissance should be explained along the lines that tactical reconnaissance is normally obtained through repeated coverage of specific areas and normally involves a considerable increase in the number of sorties due to the fact that weather requirements must be relaxed.

4. Photographic reconnaissance obtained by high altitude U-2 aircraft will normally satisfy surveillance requirements  either side of the flight track and technical intelligence  either side of the flight track. Low level reconnaissance on the other hand is designed to obtain the best resolution for technical intelligence on a specific target and will normally cover approximately  either side of the flight track.

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5. Reference Page 3 - last paragraph:

This paragraph is in error. The CIA monthly forecast reflects the CIA/OSA estimate based on information contained in COMOR/USIB/ Special Group papers. Taken in straight text it appears that CIA now has sole responsibility for overflights and approvals.

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6. Reference Page 6 - last paragraph:

It should be clearly noted that the peripheral portion of the CIA proposed track was dictated by range limitations rather than the intention to obtain adequate photographic coverage in this manner.

7. Reference Page 8 - last paragraph:

This comment cannot be supported by facts. It must be remembered that when the four sorties were approved certain priorities were established either by other government agencies and within the CIA and that weather was favorable for peripheral missions prior to the date they were flown. The reason behind this was simply that the highest priority of the four was the Isle of Pines and the Banes area.



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Chief, Operations Division, OSA

cc: OSA/INTEL  
OSA/WX

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OSA/OD  (4 Mar 63)

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